

HOUSE No. 4344

Message from His Excellency the Governor returning with his objections thereto in writing the engrossed Bill relative to the registration of motor vehicles and trailers (see House, No. 4238). July 27, 2012.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



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July 27, 2012.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

Pursuant to Part the Second, Chapter 1, Section 1, Article II of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I am returning unsigned House Bill No. 4238, "An Act Relative to the Registration of Motor Vehicles and Trailers."

House Bill No. 4238 relates solely to registration of ownership of a motor vehicle by non-residents, purportedly for public safety purposes. It is hard to understand how a non-resident simply owning a vehicle in Massachusetts jeopardizes the public's safety. Indeed, it serves the public's safety interests to know, through registration, the name and whereabouts of the owner of every vehicle on the Commonwealth's roads. Without a legitimate public safety purpose, this bill appears to be aimed at using the RMV to identify and police undocumented people. This is an inappropriate purpose. The recent ruling of the United States Supreme Court, striking down most of Arizona's anti-immigrant law, underscores the importance of states treading lightly in the enforcement of federal immigration rules. Not only is the enforcement of federal laws the duty and responsibility of the federal government, *see Arizona v. United States*, No. 11-182, 567 U.S. ___ (2012), but the RMV also is ill-equipped and under-staffed for such an assignment.

By my proposed amendments to this legislation, I attempted to strike a commonsense and balanced approach to motor vehicle registration rules that serve the public safety interests of the Commonwealth. Because these amendments were not adopted and for the reasons set forth above, I return House Bill No. 4238 unsigned.

Respectfully submitted,

DEVAL L. PATRICK,
Governor.